United Nations

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit

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FOREWORD

The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) was created on an experimental basis under General Assembly resolution 2150 (XXI) of 4 November 1966. On 1 January 1978, the statute of the Unit, as adopted by the Assembly in its resolution 31/192 of 22 December 1976, took effect. By this action, the Unit became a subsidiary organ of the legislative bodies of the organizations within the United Nations system which have accepted the statute of the Unit. Those organizations, hereinafter referred to as the participating organizations, are listed in chapter II of the present report. The main purpose of the Unit is to enhance the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations system.

According to its statute, the Unit shall, inter alia, satisfy itself that the activities undertaken by the participating organizations are carried out in the most economical manner and that optimum use is made of resources available for carrying out their activities. The Unit is composed of 11 Inspectors having experience in national or international administrative and financial matters, including management questions, and are appointed by the General Assembly on the basis of equitable geographical distribution. They serve in their personal capacity for a term of five years, renewable once.

Inspectors have the broadest powers of investigation in all matters having a bearing on the efficiency of services and proper use of resources and may make on-the-spot inquiries and investigations. They are also mandated to inspect and evaluate the activities of the participating organizations and make recommendations aimed at improving management and methods and at achieving greater coordination among those organizations.

At its fiftieth session, the General Assembly, in the preamble to resolution 50/233 of 7 June 1996, reaffirmed the statute of the Unit, the only independent system-wide inspection, evaluation and investigation body.

The Unit prepares reports, notes and confidential letters addressed to one or more organizations and/or of interest to the United Nations system as a whole. In addition, the Unit submits an annual report, covering its main activities during the year, to the General Assembly and to the legislative organs of the participating organizations.

The present report is the twenty-eighth of its kind prepared by the Unit since its establishment.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report gives an account of the activities carried out by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) during the period from 1 July 1995 to 30 June 1996.

2. In its resolution 50/233, the General Assembly stressed that the impact of the Unit was a shared responsibility of the Member States, the Unit and the secretariats of the participating organizations. The Member States are increasingly interested in issues examined by the Unit, especially in taking concrete actions on the Unit's recommendations, as the Committee for Programme and Coordination did at its thirty-fourth session in 1996. The secretariats of the participating organizations in general also have shown greater interest and cooperation in reports being prepared by the Unit. Nevertheless, the role and functions of the Unit still need to be better understood.

3. The Unit has focused its work on compliance with the commitments made in its 1995 annual report in response to the directives of the General Assembly as contained in its resolution 50/233. The present report should be seen as a timely account of actions taken pursuant to those commitments and directives.

II. PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

4. The following are the organizations that have accepted the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit:

United Nations and its affiliated bodies

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

World Health Organization (WHO)

Universal Postal Union (UPU)

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

III. COMPOSITION OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

5. The composition of the Unit as at 30 June 1996 was as follows:

Mr. Homero L. Hernández-Sánchez (Dominican Republic),* Chairman

Mr. Khalil I. Othman (Jordan),* Vice-Chairman

Mr. Andrzej Abraszewski (Poland)****

Mr. Fatih Bouayad-Agha (Algeria)*

Mr. John D. Fox (United States of America)****

Mr. Boris P. Krasulin (Russian Federation)*

Mr. Sumihiro Kuyama (Japan)***

Mr. Francesco Mezzalama (Italy)*

Mr. Wolfgang Münch (Germany)****

Mr. Louis-Dominique Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso)****

Mr. Raúl Quijano (Argentina)**

6. In accordance with article 18 of its statute, the Unit elected Mr. Homero L. Hernández-Sánchez as Chairman and Mr. Khalil I. Othman as Vice-Chairman for the calendar year 1996. During the year 1995, Mr. Fatih Bouayad-Agha and Mr. Homero L. Hernández-Sánchez were, respectively, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Unit.

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* Term of office expires on 31 December 1997.

** Term of office expires on 31 December 1998.

*** Term of office expires on 31 December 1999.

**** Term of office expires on 31 December 2000.

IV. SECRETARIAT

7. The Joint Inspection Unit has a secretariat that consists of an Executive Secretary, seven research officers, two research assistants at the principal General Service level and eight other General Service staff. Despite the increase in workload over the years, the JIU secretariat staffing table has decreased from 21 at its inception to 18 at present.

8. Article 20 of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit defines the procedure for the consideration of its budget as follows: "The budget estimates shall be established by the Secretary-General after consultation with the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the basis of proposals made by the Unit".

9. The Unit has stressed the need for additional staff and the General Assembly has repeatedly called for strengthening the external oversight bodies and has endorsed recommendations for strengthening JIU in particular.

10. In this regard, the Unit requested a modest increase in staff resources in the context of its budgetary requirements for the biennium 1996-1997. The Secretary-General did not include those requests in his proposed programme budget for 1996-1997, without providing official explanation or justification to either the Unit or the General Assembly.

11. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions included the following observations and recommendations in its report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, which were endorsed by the General Assembly in section III, paragraph 1, of its resolution 50/214:

(a) The budget proposal for JIU in 1996-1997 should be considered in the light of the requirements of General Assembly resolution 48/221, in which the Assembly had requested the Secretary-General and the Unit to study and to report to the Assembly on means by which JIU could enhance its inspection and evaluation activities, as well as the need to strengthen the external oversight control mechanisms, as emphasized by the Assembly in its resolution 48/218 B;

(b) The Secretary-General should report on the steps taken and arrangements made to implement paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 48/221, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the participating organizations to consider providing the Unit with extrabudgetary resources and programme support in those areas which are linked to those resources.

12. It must be recalled that while the existing JIU secretariat's staffing table is as approved in the initial programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, the General Assembly, in section III, paragraph 65, of resolution 50/214, requested the Secretary-General, taking into account the decision to strengthen external oversight mechanisms, in close cooperation with the Joint Inspection Unit and in conformity with the procedures for consultation with the Administrative Committee on Coordination, to present proposals on strengthening the Unit's secretariat in the framework of the revised estimates for the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

13. At the time of submission of the present report JIU has not been consulted by the Secretary-General on any proposal for strengthening its secretariat nor has it been informed of the intentions of the Secretary-General to implement those requests of the General Assembly. The Assembly may therefore wish to act on this matter in the context of the revised estimates for the biennium 1996-1997.

V. PROGRAMME OF WORK

14. The Unit has established its programme of work for 1996-1997 and a preliminary list of subjects for 1997-1998 and beyond (A/51/559). The preliminary list is tentative and does not necessarily imply that JIU will undertake all of the items included in it. The Unit's programmes of work are flexible enough to allow the addition of new emerging priority issues. In June 1996, for example, the Unit was requested at short notice by the Board of Trustees of UNITAR to undertake a feasibility study, to be considered at its September session, on the relocation of UNITAR from Geneva to Turin. That report (see A/51/642) was completed in less than eight weeks.

15. In drawing up its programme of work, the Unit sought to improve the quality and relevance of its outputs. The Inspectors understood the importance of a well-balanced, flexible and realistic programme of work for this purpose. The programme of work for 1996-1997 is a further step towards responding, in cooperation with the secretariats of the participating organizations, to the interests of the Member States.

16. In establishing the programme of work for 1996-1997, the Inspectors were guided by the provisions of the statute of JIU, in particular articles 5 and 9; the relevant resolutions of the legislative organs of the participating organizations, especially General Assembly resolutions 48/221 and 50/233; and the internal standards and guidelines of the Unit.

17. In establishing its programme of work under article 9.1 of its statute, the Unit strove as much as possible to satisfy the concerns expressed by the legislative bodies of the participating organizations and their secretariats, as well as those of the internal and external oversight bodies. The Unit is determined to coordinate the implementation of its work programme with other internal and external oversight bodies.

18. As mentioned in its 1995 annual report, the Unit has decided to change its work programme cycle from January-December to July-June in order to ensure the timely presentation of JIU reports to the pertinent legislative organs.

19. To ascertain that its programme of work be prepared in the optimal way in response to the specific needs of the Member States, the 1996-1997 programme of work was prepared in the light of these new procedures.

20. Of the total of 10 topics included in the 1996-1997 programme of work, two topics concern the United Nations, five are system-wide, two are of concern to several organizations and one concerns a single organization. With respect to priority areas, six are devoted to administration and management, three fall under development cooperation and one under humanitarian assistance. In the opinion of the Unit, the combination of topics represents a well-balanced choice of priority items and complies with the General Assembly's invitation to the Unit to continue taking full advantage of its system-wide competence in undertaking comparative analysis on trends and problems faced by various organizations and to propose harmonized, practical and concrete solutions.

VI. MEASURES TO FURTHER ENHANCE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

21. The improvement of any activity is a continuous process. The General Assembly has adopted several resolutions encouraging JIU to improve its performance, effectiveness and efficiency. At its fiftieth session, the Assembly, in a timely, action-oriented resolution (resolution 50/233), focused its attention on the basic requirements for enhancing the impact of the Unit. The Unit has analysed in detail the provisions of that resolution and has drawn the necessary conclusions for their implementation.

22. The Member States, directly or through collective actions in the legislative organs, have shown increased interest in JIU performance and functioning. The Unit has called for this kind of involvement and welcomes this trend.

23. Article 12 of the JIU statute implies that the Unit's recommendations are presented to the competent legislative organs for approval. One of the main concerns of the Unit has been that legislative organs of its participating organizations in most instances only take note of its reports and recommendations. This legislative practice creates legal ambiguity about secretariat obligations to implement the Unit's recommendations and thus makes it difficult to measure the effectiveness of the JIU reports and the impact of its recommendations.

24. During its consideration of the JIU reports at its thirty-fourth session, the Committee for Programme and Coordination took detailed action on each and all of the recommendations contained in the two JIU reports before it. The Unit trusts this practice will be emulated.

25. In its resolution 50/233, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General and invited the executive heads of participating organizations to take the necessary measures to ensure that the thematic reports of JIU were listed under the appropriate agenda items of their programmes of work; and, most importantly, invited the legislative organs of other participating organizations to take concrete action on the recommendations of the Unit.

26. Cooperation between the secretariats and JIU is crucial for the functioning of the Unit. Nevertheless, the distinct roles of Inspectors in regard to participating organizations' secretariats still need to be better understood.

27. As reported in its 1995 annual report, the Unit established a Working Group to further develop internal standards and guidelines for inspection, evaluation and investigation, as envisaged in article 8 of its statute. The Unit approved a revised set of internal standards and procedures as requested by the General Assembly in resolution 50/233. The Unit has considered it useful to attach these standards and guidelines to the present report (see annex I) in order to allow the Member States, other expert bodies and the secretariats of participating organizations to gain a better understanding of how the Unit fulfils its mandate. They are subject to further change by the Unit in the light of experience, which allows for interaction with the Member States and the secretariats.

28. The internal standards and guidelines will be supplemented by a more detailed set of internal working procedures which should help the Unit improve

its internal functioning and, therefore, increase the quality and performance of its work.

29. The Unit has continued developing an internal technological information system. As a key element of the system, the information and documentation centre mentioned in its last report will be formally and functionally established by the end of 1996. Once operational, it should help to improve the Unit's capabilities.

30. As stated in its 1995 report, once such a system is in place, the Unit expects to increase its research capacity in terms of enabling it to (a) maintain a database; (b) conduct more in-depth feasibility studies before choosing new items for inspection, evaluation or investigation; (c) make a thorough analysis of the discussions, reports, resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and of the legislative organs of other participating organizations; and (d) establish a more effective follow-up mechanism.

31. Procedures for developing the Unit's programme of work will ensure that the items chosen are of major interest to Member States and constitute a direct response to the General Assembly's request to JIU to continue focusing its reports on important priority items and identifying concrete managerial, administrative and programming questions aimed at providing it and other legislative organs of participating organizations with practical and action-oriented recommendations.

32. The Unit holds regular meetings, open to the Executive Secretary and the research staff, for the collective consideration of the preparation of its reports, including brainstorming sessions. As a matter of principle, the first and the final draft reports are reviewed thoroughly in official meetings of the Inspectors and research staff concerned. In addition, the Inspectors and research staff are invited to present their views in writing when that would be useful.

33. The budgetary and administrative independence of the Unit has been a matter of concern for Inspectors. Despite the General Assembly's recognition of JIU support staff needs, the Unit's requirements have not yet been met. The Inspectors remain of the opinion that their request for strengthening the Unit's support staff continues to be in the interest of Member States in having more effective oversight performance by JIU. In a separate note to be presented under the sub-item "Strengthening of the external oversight mechanisms", the Unit will elaborate further on this issue.

34. As reported in its 1995 annual report and within the context of article 18 of its statute, the Unit has taken steps on ways of ensuring more effective leadership roles by its Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Inspectors established a mechanism to ensure continuity, transparence and more effective management. The mechanism consists of a group composed of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the former Chairman - referred to internally as the Troika - with the participation of the Executive Secretary, which holds regular meetings to review issues relevant to the Unit's functioning and performance.

VII. RELATIONS AND COOPERATION WITH THE PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS, EXTERNAL OVERSIGHT BODIES AND OTHER RELEVANT BODIES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

35. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 48/221, the General Assembly invited JIU to maintain a close relationship with other external and internal oversight bodies and organizations and bodies within the United Nations system in order to ensure greater and more cost-effective coordination of their respective activities for the promotion of management efficiency, greater accountability and transparency of the United Nations and other participating organizations. The Unit is fully aware of this provision and strives to meet its share.

A. Participating organizations

36. The Unit has continued to make efforts to strengthen its cooperation and coordination with both the legislative bodies and the secretariats of the participating organizations.

37. The Unit is empowered to make on-the-spot inquiries and investigations, some of which may be without prior notification, as and when the Inspectors themselves decide, in any of the services of the organizations (see article 6 of the statute of the Unit). However, JIU has up to now refrained from exercising this prerogative in order to allow the secretariats involved enough time and full opportunity to interact with the Inspectors and the Unit, satisfying, at the same time, essential requirements of transparency.

38. During the reporting period, the Inspectors concerned attended the fiftieth session of the General Assembly and the sessions of other legislative organs of the participating organizations, where they introduced and discussed their reports.

39. The relations with the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its subsidiary bodies continue to be constructive and pragmatic. Nevertheless, although the statute allows the Committee a full six-month period for producing its comments on JIU reports, this time limit has too often not been observed, hindering a meaningful consideration of the reports by the legislative organs.

40. Another major problem relates to the provision of information requested by JIU for the preparation of its reports. In its resolution 50/233 the General Assembly again requested the Secretary-General and the other executive heads of participating organizations to assist the Unit fully, with timely provision of all information requested by it. The Unit is developing new procedures and techniques of questionnaire preparation and data collection which should facilitate the provision of information by the secretariats of participating organizations.

B. Other external oversight bodies

41. The Unit has continued its good working relations and practical cooperation with other external oversight bodies. The relations with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions are good in general, but a more systematic and substantial working relationship would be useful. The working interactions with the Committee for Programme and Coordination continue to be

meaningful. That Committee traditionally has been interested in considering JIU reports and normally makes concrete comments, suggestions and recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly. It has also been active in making suggestions for issues to be included in the JIU work programme. The Unit welcomes and commends this cooperation between the two external oversight bodies.

42. The Unit's good relations with the Panel of External Auditors and the United Nations Board of Auditors have been maintained during the reporting period, both in terms of exchange of documents and information and of consultations on common issues.

43. The Unit has benefited from the experience of the International Civil Service Commission in its field of competence and intends to develop this cooperation further, through more practical means.

C. Internal oversight bodies

44. The Unit participated in the twenty-seventh meeting of representatives of internal audit services of the United Nations organizations and multilateral financial institutions.

45. The working relations between JIU and the Office of Internal Oversight Services continue to be strengthened. In fact, the Office has been active in making suggestions on issues to be included in the Unit's programme of work.

46. The Unit and the Office are working out a procedure to facilitate the provision of General Assembly resolution 48/218 B under which the Office is mandated to ascertain compliance with approved recommendations emanating from external oversight bodies, including the Unit.

D. Other organizations and institutions

47. The Unit, in the course of preparing its reports, has developed over the years relations with organizations and institutions outside the United Nations system. They include governmental institutions, regional organizations (such as the Council of Europe, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, the European Union, the Latin American Economic System, the League of Arab States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, non-governmental organizations, research institutions and the like. The Unit is currently taking steps aimed at increasing and further developing relations with specialized institutions such as the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions.

48. A group of members of the Parliament of Germany visited JIU in June 1996. The meeting provided the opportunity for a broad exchange of views related to matters of control and oversight in the United Nations system. German parliamentarians attached a particular interest to the question of a proper follow-up of JIU reports. They also underlined the distinct, mutually complementary roles that the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Unit would play, and that States Members of the United Nations would need both.

VIII. FOLLOW-UP AND IMPLEMENTATION OF JOINT INSPECTION UNIT RECOMMENDATIONS

49. In its 1995 annual report, the Unit stressed that follow-up is a continuous process that starts immediately after a JIU report is sent out for action (the so-called "blue cover report"). Indeed, this constitutes the most important phase and starting point for testing the quality and the potential impact of JIU recommendations.

50. The Unit committed itself to providing the General Assembly and all legislative organs of its participating organizations with a clearer, more comprehensive, coherent and up-to-date follow-up analysis of the implementation of the approved JIU recommendations. In this regard, in accordance with article 12 of its statute, the Unit is developing a follow-up system aimed at tracking actions taken on its reports and approved recommendations.

51. The most significant measure to be taken will be to request heads of organizations to provide a timetable for the implementation of approved JIU recommendations. The Unit has already initiated practical procedures for introducing this new notion progressively and with flexibility on a case-by-case basis, according to the nature and scope of its recommendation. JIU would, in particular, like to solicit the cooperation of the General Assembly and other legislative bodies of participating organizations and the various executive heads of organizations in supporting this effort.

52. As stated in its 1995 annual report, the Unit has compiled specific information on delays in submitting comments on individual reports. The table provides a sample of delays in the submission of comments by participating organizations between 1992 and 1995.

53. With the establishment of the Information and Documentation Centre, the Unit will have the capacity to undertake a close monitoring of all follow-up actions on its reports and recommendations and, in particular, the impact of its recommendations approved by the legislative organs of the participating organizations.

Delay in submitting comments on JIU reports issued from January 1992 to June 1995*

Delay (in months)	Submission from the Administrative Committee on Coordination		Submission from executive heads		Total for all submissions	
	Number of reports	Percentage	Number of reports	Percentage	Number of reports	Percentage
No delay	7	63.6	4	50.0	11	57.9
1-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
3-6	1	9.1	1	12.5	2	10.5
7-12	-	-	1	12.5	1	5.3
Over 12	1	9.1	-	-	1	5.3
No response	2	18.2	2	25.0	4	21.0
Total	11	100.0	8	100.0	19	100.0

* In the future, the Unit will present detailed information on the submissions of individual organizations.

Annex I

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

A. Applicability

1. The Unit follows a standard approach in planning, designing, conducting and reporting on inspections, evaluations and investigations.

2. These standards and guidelines, elaborated in accordance with the JIU statute, and having been approved by the Inspectors, apply to the selection, planning, conduct and reporting of the Unit's inspections, evaluations and investigations. They are subject to further change by the Unit, in the light of experience, following procedures established for approval.*

B. Functions of the Joint Inspection Unit

3. Articles 5 and 6 of the Joint Inspection Unit statute stipulate that it conducts inspections, evaluations and investigations to provide an independent view of the efficiency of services and programmes, as well as the proper use of funds, of its participating organizations. The Unit is the only independent system-wide oversight body with the authority to perform inspections, evaluations and investigations throughout the United Nations system. In practice, however, the Unit has concentrated primarily on evaluations and inspections, and conducts relatively few investigations. As stated in the statute, the Unit will satisfy itself that the activities undertaken by the participating organizations are carried out in the most economical manner and that optimum use is made of the resources available for carrying out these activities.

4. Since its inception in 1968, the work of the Unit has evolved in response to changes in both the issues of interest to the Member States and the methods of conducting inspections, evaluations and investigations. In the 1970s, the Unit placed emphasis on reports regarding evaluations and evaluation methodologies, which served to promote, in effect, the establishment of internal evaluation units throughout the United Nations system.

5. In response to increased concerns and calls from the Member States, since the 1980s the Unit's emphasis has shifted to reviewing whether services were provided efficiently and funds used properly and, therefore, the Unit gave greater attention to management, budgetary and administrative issues of specific activities of interest of Member States. The Unit is mindful of the mandates emanating from legislative organs when selecting topics for inclusion in its work programme.

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* The Unit's more detailed procedures and policies are documented in the internal operating manual.

6. In accordance with article 11 of the statute, the Unit prepares reports, notes and confidential letters on the work of its participating organizations. The Inspectors draw up, over their own signature, reports, notes and confidential letters for which they are responsible and in which they state their findings and propose solutions to the problems they have noted. The information and data contained in the reports, notes and confidential letters, as well as the conclusions and recommendations of Inspectors, are tested against the collective wisdom of the Unit.

7. Reports are issued when recommendations are addressed to legislative organs of the participating organizations concerned and require their consideration and approval.

8. Notes are issued and addressed to the executive heads of the participating organizations when decisions on recommendations can be made by the executive heads concerned, without governing body authorization.

9. Confidential letters are addressed to executive heads when the Unit wishes to draw their attention to findings that do not require issuing a report or note or are not suitable for inclusion in reports, and decisions on recommendations and/or corrective measures that can be taken by the executive heads alone.

10. The Joint Inspection Unit statute authorizes the Unit to conduct inspections, evaluations and investigations, which will be handled on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with appropriate standards and procedures. The broad criteria that will be used during formulation of the work programme will include applying the following definitions:

(a) An inspection is an independent, on-site review of the operations of organizational units to determine the extent to which they are performing as expected. An inspection examines the functioning of processes or activities to verify their effectiveness and efficiency. An inspection compares processes, activities, projects, and programmes to established criteria (e.g., applicable rules and regulations, internal administrative instructions, good operational practices of other units within or outside the organization concerned), and does so in view of the resources allocated to them;

(b) An evaluation is an independent review of the outputs of activities, projects or programmes to determine their relevance, added value and impact. An evaluation examines the quality and quantity of the outputs to verify whether they are meeting the intended objectives. An evaluation compares the outputs against objectives, as established through legislative mandates, and assesses whether managers are applying the best management and administrative practices;

(c) An investigation is an independent inquiry into the conduct of, or action taken by, an individual or group of individuals or a situation or occurrence resulting from accident or force of nature. An investigation pursues reports of alleged violations of rules and regulations and other established procedures, mismanagement, misconduct, waste of resources or abuse of authority with a view to proposing corrective management and administrative measures, and as appropriate, bringing the matter to the attention of suitable legal authorities and/or internal offices of investigation. An investigation compares the subject under investigation to established criteria (e.g., rules and regulations, codes of conduct, administrative instructions and applicable law).

11. The Unit is assisted by an Executive Secretary and such staff as authorized, in accordance with the procedures set forth in article 20 of the statute.

C. Development of the work programme

12. In accordance with article 9 of the statute, the Unit is responsible for preparing its annual work programme. In doing so, it takes into account, besides its own observations, experience and assessment of priorities with regard to subjects for inspection, evaluation or investigation, any requests of the competent legislative organs of the participating organizations and suggestions received from the executive heads of the organizations and the bodies of the United Nations system concerned with budgetary control, investigation, coordination and evaluation.

13. The Unit develops its annual work programme based on a comprehensive analysis of requests, proposals and suggestions, which determines, inter alia, the nature of the undertaking, i.e., inspection, evaluation or investigation; its objectives and scope; and the availability of resources of the Unit for the purpose.

14. The work programme is subject to change by the Inspectors during the course of the year in order to address emerging requests from legislative organs or in response to changing priorities. New proposals to be included in the work programme during the course of the year will be subject to the established procedure.

15. The Unit attempts to prepare a balanced work programme that includes both system-wide and single organization issues. The total number of items chosen in respect of the current year's programme should not be more than those which can be completed or started during the year.

16. To prepare the Unit's work programme, the Chairman will write to the executive heads of participating organizations and to expert bodies referred to in article 9 of the Unit's statute, asking them for requests and suggestions. The Chairman also will solicit proposals and suggestions from the Inspectors and research staff. The Inspectors will hold a substantive session to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the requests, proposals and suggestions, taking into consideration deliberations in the legislative bodies of participating organizations, as well as their individual expertise or knowledge, with the objective of adopting a tentative list of topics for inclusion in the work programme. This session allows the Inspectors to have a thorough discussion of each topic and to arrive at a well-developed and balanced work programme.

17. The Executive Secretary will write to the participating organizations and expert bodies informing them whether or not their suggestions were included in the work programme and will transmit the full work programme to them.

D. Guidelines for planning and designing inspections, evaluations and investigations

18. Inspectors are fully responsible for the planning, design, scheduling, preparation and final content of their respective reports, notes and confidential letters.

19. In the planning phase of the inspections, evaluations and investigations, the Inspectors further clarify and define the purpose and the objectives; specify the scope; identify methodological issues; and gain familiarity with the processes, activities, projects or programmes under review, including relevant legislative mandates.

20. As soon as practicable, after an issue has been included in the work programme, a structured and detailed design plan for the inspection, evaluation or investigation and a detailed plan for scheduling activities, including the most effective and timely means of gathering the information required, is prepared by the responsible Inspector(s), assisted by the Executive Secretary and designated research staff. In this context, Inspectors examine readily available information and establish contacts as necessary to plan their work.

21. The detailed design plan specifies the approach to be used in conducting the inspection, evaluation or investigation and includes, inter alia, a more precise and detailed description of the purpose and objectives, which should be clear, specific, impartial and measurable; the specific issues and questions to be addressed; and potential conclusions and recommendations. The detailed design plan includes and specifies, inter alia, the type and amount of information and data required; the methods for data collection; techniques for data analysis; estimated travel costs; a description of the responsibilities of Inspectors and staff involved; and a distribution of tasks among them.

22. Inspectors consider the burden placed on organizations when selecting data collection and analytical techniques during the design phase. When it is determined that questionnaires are the most effective instruments for collecting data, they are as concise and clear as possible. Standards for developing questionnaires are found in the Unit's internal procedures manual.

23. In order to help limit the burden on secretariats, information readily available in programme budgets, financial regulations and rules, staff regulations and rules, financial reports and accounts, governing body reports, documents prepared for meetings of governing bodies, handbooks and manuals should not be requested. The information extracted may be verified with the organizations concerned if the Inspector(s) deem(s) it necessary to do so. Furthermore, the Unit endeavours to be more selective in its requests and makes increased use of information technology.

24. According to article 6 of the statute, Inspectors will be accorded full cooperation by organizations at all levels, including access to any particular information or document relevant to their work. In the event such cooperation is not forthcoming, the Inspector(s) may take the matter up with senior officials of the organization including, if necessary, the executive head. Should cooperation or information still not be forthcoming, the Inspector(s) may so state in the report and the Unit may include a statement in its annual report.

E. Guidelines for conducting inspections, evaluations and investigations

Inspection

25. The goal of an inspection is to improve operational effectiveness and efficiency. Accordingly, during the planning and design phases, the objectives and issues are formulated by the Inspector(s) in a manner that compares the

processes and activities of an organizational unit to established criteria to determine whether resources are being managed effectively and efficiently. At the conclusion of the design phase, the Inspector(s) should be able:

(a) To identify existing criteria, such as current rules, regulations or legislative mandates that govern the operations of the processes and activities being inspected, to be used as the basis for assessing operational efficiency and effectiveness;

(b) To identify specific executive or legislative actions being considered that may affect the process or activity being inspected;

(c) To understand the interest/concern of Member States regarding the process or activity;

(d) To clarify the exact purpose of the inspection, which may include, as appropriate, answering the following:

(i) Is the entity being reviewed acquiring, protecting and using its resources (such as personnel, property and space) economically and efficiently?

(ii) What are the causes of inefficiencies and uneconomical practices?

(iii) Has the entity complied with rules and regulations on matters of economy?

(e) To understand the process, activity, project or programme to be inspected;

(f) To determine the presence and use of relevant internal controls related to the processes, activities, projects or programmes being reviewed. The Inspector(s) should be alert to situations or transactions that could be indicative of violations of rules and regulations and misconduct that may have a direct impact on results.

Evaluation

26. The goal of an evaluation is to measure the outputs of an activity, project or programme against legislative mandates. The objectives and issues are formulated by the Inspector(s) in a manner that compares results or outputs to established mandates to determine relevance, compliance and impact. Two major categories of evaluation the Unit will likely be involved with include:

(a) Formative or process evaluation. This includes appraising the processes of an ongoing activity, project or programme in order to propose modification and/or improvements. Activities may include analysis of management strategies and of interactions among persons involved in the programme, personnel appraisal, surveys of attitudes towards the programme, and observation. In some cases, this will include comparisons between agencies;

(b) Impact or outcome evaluation. This evaluation category corresponds to one of the most common definitions of evaluation - that is, finding out how well an entire activity, project or programme works. The results of an impact evaluation - or of a programme results review - are intended to provide information useful in major decisions about programme continuation, expansion, or reduction. The value of an impact evaluation conducted by an independent

body, like the Joint Inspection Unit, is that the more independent the analysis, the more credible the results of the impact evaluation.

27. At the conclusion of the design phase, the Inspector(s) should be able:

(a) To identify the existing criteria, or legislative mandates, which describe the expected outputs for the activity, project or programme being evaluated;

(b) To identify any specific executive or legislative actions being considered that may affect the activity, project or programme being evaluated;

(c) To understand the interest/concern of Member States regarding the activity, project or programme;

(d) To clarify the exact purpose of the evaluation that may include, as appropriate, answering the following:

(i) To what extent are the desired results or benefits established by the legislative body being achieved?

(ii) Is the activity, project or programme effective in meeting the objectives and goals identified by the legislative body?

(iii) Has the activity, project or programme being reviewed complied with significant, applicable rules and regulations?

(iv) Is the activity, project or programme achieving its objectives in an economical and efficient manner?

(e) To understand the activity, project or programme objectives and legislative history;

(f) To identify all applicable rules and regulations for the implementation of the mandate. Although not specifically the emphasis of an evaluation, the Inspector(s) should design the work to provide reasonable assurance of detecting violations of rules and regulations and misconduct that could significantly affect evaluation objectives. The Inspector(s) should be alert to situations or transactions that could be indicative of mismanagement, misconduct or abuses of authority that may have a direct impact on results;

(g) To identify any relevant internal controls related to the programme being reviewed.

28. Evaluations may require a more structured methodology than an inspection. As a result, the structured design plan for an evaluation may include the following, as appropriate:

(a) If sampling is to be used, a description and justification of the details of the sampling methodology (e.g., choice of unit, method of selection, time-frame etc.);

(b) Specification and description of the measurement methods and instruments as well as an estimate of their reliability and validity for the population to be measured;

(c) Justification that the appropriate procedures and instruments have been specified.

Investigation

29. The goal of an investigation is to review a specific case involving alleged violations of rules and regulations or other established procedures; mismanagement; misconduct; waste of resources; or abuses of authority.

30. If an allegation pertains to violations of rules or regulations, misconduct or abuse of authority, the Unit will determine if it is necessary to involve personnel with the appropriate background to provide advice. Under some circumstances, the methodology to be observed in the conduct of such reviews will require the assistance of legal counsel. In addition, the Unit may decide the case should be referred to the appropriate authorities, namely the Office of Internal Oversight Services, internal investigation bodies of other participating organizations, and/or competent law enforcement agencies.

31. The appropriate guidance and standards for data collection and analysis are strictly applied, particularly with regard to corroboration of data/information collected from different sources. The development of evidence must be sufficient to prove the charge, which is done by following a detailed plan, subject to adjustment as new evidence is added. Due process and careful evaluation and testing of the evidence will be adhered to in all situations.

32. All data collected in the case of an investigation must be safeguarded to ensure both the physical protection of the data and evidence, from both modification and destruction, and the confidentiality of source(s).

F. Standards to be applied when conducting inspections, evaluations or investigations

General standards

33. In the course of conducting inspections, evaluations and investigations, the Unit abides by the following general standards as a tool to ensure consistency and quality in the information and conclusions presented in its reports, notes and confidential letters on the activities of participating organizations:

(a) Independence. The Inspectors must be independent and free of inappropriate influence, from any country or organization, in the conduct of inspections, evaluations and investigations. According to article 7 of the statute, they will discharge their duties in full independence and the sole interest of the organizations. The contents of reports, notes and confidential letters will be based on independent, objective analysis;

(b) Competence. The Inspectors, Executive Secretary and concerned staff must possess the required and relevant qualifications and competencies, according to their specific functions. Collectively, the Unit must be equipped with the full range of up-to-date methodologies, which may include system-based review techniques, analytical review methods, and statistical sampling;

(c) Integrity. The Inspectors, Executive Secretary and concerned staff must possess the highest standard of integrity for performing their duties;

(d) Due care. The Inspectors, Executive Secretary and concerned staff must give special attention to using objective and independent methods for gathering and evaluating evidence, and in developing conclusions and recommendations. They are bound by professional secrecy with regard to all confidential information they receive;

(e) Quality. The Unit plans, designs and conducts its work in a manner that ensures quality, which is defined as accuracy, objectivity, fairness, completeness, significance, added value, timeliness and clarity.

Other general standards

34. The Unit will avail itself of personnel with the suitable qualifications for conducting inspections, evaluations and investigations.

35. It is the general policy of the Unit to provide opportunities for training to improve, and keep updated, the skills and competencies of the Inspectors, Executive Secretary and staff in order to perform effectively.

Data collection and analysis standards

36. Each inspection, evaluation and investigation will be uniquely tailored to meet the stated objectives and address issues under review with the aim of identifying possible administrative shortcomings, weaknesses and deficiencies, and to propose corrective actions.

37. A variety of data sources will be used in each inspection, evaluation and investigation. The combination of these sources, the emphasis given to each, and the analytical approaches applied may vary, but each source should be used to corroborate and verify the other. Specific data sources may include:

On-the-spot inquiries

Record reviews of individual files

Computerized extraction of data

Document reviews of written material, tape recordings, films and videos

Mailed questionnaires and surveys

Personal observations

Interviews

38. Competent, relevant and reasonable evidence should be obtained to inform and support the Inspectors' judgement and conclusions regarding the organization, process, activity, project or programme under inspection, evaluation or investigation. Throughout the data collection and analysis phase, the Inspector(s) will apply the following standards to ensure consistency and quality:

Reliability - how dependable and consistent are the data/information being gathered?

Validity - how much confidence is there that the data/information measure what they purport to measure?

Relevance - will the data/information in fact be used to answer the decision makers' questions?

Significance - will the data/information go beyond what is apparent from direct observation and tell the decision makers something new and important?

Efficiency - are the data/information being collected in a manner that reflects the most economical use of resources and makes a unique contribution to improving concrete aspects of operations concerned?

Timeliness - will the analytical information, conclusions and recommendations be available in time to meet decision makers' schedules?

39. All data collected, including interviews and observations, should be documented to facilitate the sharing of information between the Inspectors, Executive Secretary and staff and for use during the analytical and writing phases, and to provide back-up support for presentation to legislative bodies.

G. Preparation of reports

General

40. At the conclusion of each inspection, evaluation or investigation, a written report, note or confidential letter will be prepared by the Inspector(s) setting out the objectives, conclusions and recommendations in a uniform and reader-friendly format. Contents of reports, notes and confidential letters should be easy to understand; be free of vagueness or ambiguity; include only information which is supported by competent, valid and relevant evidence; take into account new publishing technologies; and be independent, objective, fair, constructive, short and concrete. Recommendations should be practical and action-oriented.

41. Reports should not exceed the applicable page limit, including annexes. If a report, by its nature, cannot be contained within the limit, the Unit should consider producing a shorter official version (for translation and submission to legislative bodies) and include background information and details in a separate note for reference purposes.

Internal consideration of reports

42. In his statutory role as coordinator, the Chairman is the focal point for ensuring a collective approach to the internal consideration of reports.

43. The first draft, amended as necessary, is circulated outside the Unit for external comments by the organizations and others concerned with the basic purpose of receiving factual corrections and clarifications and to ascertain accuracy of the data included. Once received, external comments are incorporated as appropriate into the draft report. The Unit normally includes the factual corrections and clarifications concerning the draft report, but reserves its discretion to include substantive comments.

44. The final draft of each report is discussed and tested against the collective wisdom of the Unit in a formal meeting of Inspectors.

Dissenting views

45. If an Inspector disagrees with the author of a report on its recommendation(s), he or she can request the Chairman to create a "good offices committee" composed of three Inspectors, none of whom will be the author or the Inspector in disagreement. This Committee seeks to reconcile the divergent points of view and reports to the Unit.

46. Whenever the "good offices committee" reports to the Unit that divergent points of view regarding the recommendation(s) have not been reconciled and the Unit itself fails also to reconcile these differences, a dissenting view might be expressed. Inspectors wishing to express any unresolved dissenting views will make a brief written statement that will be attached to the report.

H. Processing and issuance of reports

47. The Unit should not distribute reports to the media before such reports are issued as official public documents.

48. The Executive Secretary will verify that the detailed procedures for the handling and processing of reports contained in article 11, paragraphs 4 (a) to (e), of the statute are observed and will bring any departures from the procedures to the attention of the Chairman and the organizations concerned.

I. Follow-up of reports

49. The Unit includes a summary of the implementation of the Unit's major recommendations in its annual report.

50. Article 12 of the statute stipulates that executive heads of organizations will ensure that the recommendations of the Unit approved by their respective competent organs are implemented as expeditiously as possible. In addition, in the follow-up procedure, the role of Inspector(s) who authored the report(s), assisted by the research staff, is prominent. A system has been established to facilitate this process.

51. When the Inspector(s) who authored a report has left the Unit, the responsibility for follow-up will pass to the Unit.

J. Annual report

52. The annual report of the Unit will include a brief description of the activities of the Unit during the period, any problems that should be brought to the attention of legislative organs, as well as a section on the status of implementation of its recommendations.

Annex II

LIST OF JOINT INSPECTION UNIT REPORTS
ISSUED DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

A/50/507 Management in the United Nations: work in progress (JIU/REP/95/8)

A/50/509 The advancement of women through and in the programmes of the United Nations system: what happens after the Fourth World Conference on Women? (JIU/REP/95/5)

A/50/572 Investigation of the relationship between humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping operations (JIU/REP/95/6)

A/50/576 Military component of United Nations peacekeeping operations (JIU/REP/95/11)

A/50/687 The involvement of the United Nations system in providing and coordinating humanitarian assistance (JIU/REP/95/9)

A/50/692 Travel in the United Nations: issues of efficiency and cost savings (JIU/REP/95/10)

A/50/721 United Nations system support for science and technology in Asia and the Pacific (JIU/REP/95/7)

A/50/853 Strengthening of the United Nations system capacity for conflict prevention (JIU/REP/95/13)

A/50/885 Evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s: towards a more operational approach? (JIU/REP/95/12)

A/51/152 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development: review of institutional and programme issues (JIU/REP/96/1)